



June 28, 2007

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin

FROM: Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director

THROUGH: David Chan, Manager of Programming and Legislation

RE: Allocation of Measure A Funds to Marin County Transit District (MCTD) for Strategy 1, Agenda Item 14

Dear Commissioners:

Executive Summary

TAM provides a dedicated source of local funds for public transit for the Marin County Transit District (MCTD) to use for planning and operating transit service for County residents. Under Strategy 1 of the Expenditure Plan, it is the intent of MCTD, using Measure A funds, to develop a seamless local bus transit system that improves mobility and serves community needs, including special transit for seniors and the disabled (paratransit services). TAM had annually allocated the available amounts of Measure A funds to MCTD according to the available amounts shown in the Strategic Plan for previous years. MCTD is requesting TAM to allocate \$10,016,398 in Measure A funds for FY 07/08.

Recommendation: Allocate \$10,016,398 in Measure A funds to MCTD for Strategy 1, Transit, as programmed in the FY 07/08 update of the TAM Strategic Plan.

Background

Strategy 1 of the Measure A Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan is to develop a seamless local bus transit system that improves mobility and serves community needs, including special transit for seniors and the disabled (paratransit services). Measure A provides a dedicated source of local funds for public transit which MCTD uses to plan and implement services for the County's residents. As described in the Measure A Expenditure Plan and in the 2007 Strategic Plan Update (subject to approval), Strategy 1 includes four sub-strategies. These sub-strategies are:

- Maintain and expand local bus transit service
- Maintain and expand the rural bus transit system
- Maintain and expand transit services and programs for those with special needs – seniors, persons with disabilities, youth, and low-income residents
- Invest in bus transit facilities for a clean and efficient transit system

TAM had annually allocated the available amounts of Measure A funds to MCTD according the available amounts shown in the Strategic Plan for previous years.

Discussion

MCTD reported to its Board on June 18, 2007 that it is expecting \$10,016,398 in Measure A funds for FY 07/08. The available amount of Measure A funds in FY 07/08 for Strategy 1 is nearly \$10.08 million, which is an increase from previous years.

Strategy 1	Prior Allocation FY 06/07 ¹	Available Funds FY 07/08	Requested Funds	Carryover
1.1 Maintain and expand local bus transit service.	\$5,314,875	\$6,463,516	\$6,463,516	\$0
1.2 Maintain and expand the rural bus transit system.	\$592,202	\$709,946	\$648,920	\$61,026
1.3 Maintain and expand transit services and programs for those with special needs.	\$1,337,742	\$1,639,595	\$1,639,595	\$0
1.4 Invest in bus transit facilities for a clean and efficient transit system.	\$778,779	\$1,264,367	\$1,264,367	\$0
Total	\$8,023,598	\$10,077,424	\$10,016,398	\$61,026

¹ Pending TAM Board action on June 28, 2007, additional Measure A funds may be allocated to MCTD for FY 06/07.

The increased amount of revenues available for FY 07/08 is based on increased revenue established in the draft 2007 SPU, which is subject to approval on June 28, 2007. Based on disbursements received as of March of 2007, the total estimated Measure A revenue for FY2006-07 is approximately \$20.8 million, which reflects a 4.2% growth over actual revenue from FY2005-06. The amount of revenues received is \$1 million more than the projected amount in the 2006 Strategic Plan for FY 07/08. The additional revenues have been programmed in the 2007 SPU proportionately to Strategies 1, 3, and 4. Strategy 2, Highway 101 Gap Closure Project, is capped at \$25 million and will not receive additional revenues.

While there are sufficient Measure A funds in Strategy 1, the requested amount for FY 07/08 is approximately \$1.4 million more than the total amount allocated to MCTD for FY 06/07 after the allocation of additional Measure A funds considered in the previous agenda item. MCTD has noted that lower that anticipated fare revenue recovery, higher administrative costs, and higher loan payment as primary reasons for its budget deficit.

2007 Strategic Plan Update (SPU)

The recommended Measure A allocation amount of \$10,016,398 is the available amount in the 2007 SPU. The Strategic Plan has been revised and reviewed by the TAM Board. The approval of this allocation request is contingent on the approval of the 2007 SPU. On May 24, 2007, the TAM Board opened a public comment period for the 2007 SPU that is scheduled to end at its June 28, 2008 meeting, which would allow the TAM Board to take action on the 2007 SPU. This Measure A allocation request is subject to the approval of the 2007 SPU and will be presented after the 2007 SPU item on June 28, 2007.

Recommendation

Allocate \$10,016,398 in Measure A funds to MCTD for Strategy 1, Transit, as programmed in the FY 07/08 update of the TAM Strategic Plan.

Attachments: FY 07/08 MCTD Allocation Request

Transportation Authority of Marin Measure A – Transportation Sales Tax

Allocation Request Form

Fiscal Year of Allocation: 2007/08

Expenditure Plan: Strategy 1 – Local Bus Transit

Project Name: Support and Maintain Local Bus Service

Implementing Agency: Marin County Transit District (MCTD)

Scope of Work: MCTD uses Measure A Strategy 1 funds to plan, operate, market, and maintain Marin Local Fixed Route Bus services, Rural Transit services, Special Needs Transportation services including Paratransit and travel training, and Capital funds to support the operation of services, including purchase of vehicles and equipment for rural and local bus operations. MCTD activities include support for ongoing contracts with service providers to implement Measure A programs. MCTD approved its first Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP), as required under Measure A, on March 20, 2006. MCTD will conduct a launch of its public name and logo for Marin Transit in late July 2007 and will initiate and complete a Strategic Marketing Plan in FY 2007/08. In addition, MCTD will conduct market research and obtain rider survey information for use in completing Measure A performance monitoring.

Sub Strategy 1.1 - *Maintain and Expand Local Bus Transit Service*

This sub-strategy provides the funding necessary for Marin County Transit District to protect its local bus transit service and ensure that service levels are not only maintained, but also significantly enhanced in the longer term. This program provides the Transit District with the necessary financial independence to ensure that local bus transit service supports countywide goals for enhanced mobility and meets the needs of its residents and workers both now and in the future.

This sub-strategy provides funding to maintain and improve intercommunity bus transit service and service along major bus transit corridors. Marin County has a number of bus transit corridors that are busy enough to justify frequent service. These include all day services in the Canal – downtown San Rafael – Marin City corridor, services between San Rafael and San Anselmo, and services to local colleges, as well as peak period services to major employers in Novato, San Rafael, and other locations.

To save money and better match transit service to increased local service demands, Golden Gate Transit District and MCTD agreed in 2003 to truncate routes that had previously crossed the county lines and to create new local routes that operate entirely within Marin County. MCTD is responsible for planning and management of all local public transit routes within the County. On March 20, 2006, the MCTD Board approved its first Short Range Transit Plan (SRTP) as the basis for designing a local transit system that responds to its goals and the goals of the Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan. On May 30, 2006, MCTD approved a new service plan for implementation on September 11, 2006. The

service plan includes services operated by Golden Gate Transit under contract to MCTD and three additional small bus routes operated by Marin Airporter. The fixed route transit system will consist of a total of 130,908 hours of service in FY 2007/08. The system will have 15 regular bus routes operating in East Marin.

MCTD also provides supplemental school-oriented bus services in Marin County that are designed to serve schools at bell times (Routes 107-143). These supplemental school services currently consist of 12 routes. Revenue sources for fixed route services, in addition to Measure A, include fares and State sales tax subsidies (Transportation Development Act and State Transit Assistance) obtained through a revenue-sharing agreement with Golden Gate Transit that is based on service hours and passengers for local bus, regional bus, and ferry.

Sub Strategy 1.2 - *Maintain and Improve the Rural Bus Transit System*

"The Stagecoach" service operating in West Marin began as a one-year demonstration project in 2002, and has resulted in a sizeable grassroots following and higher-than-projected ridership. Demand for this service continues to grow. The Stagecoach did not have a dedicated source of funding until the passage of Measure A. This program maintains an expanded Stagecoach service with new routes and schedules implemented in July 2006 and April 2007, and the service is operated by MV Transportation, Inc. The West Marin Stagecoach added weekend service to Stinson Beach/Bolinas and to Pt. Reyes Station/Pt. Reyes National Seashore in July 2006. The weekend service includes service along Panoramic Highway to popular hiking destinations. Three days during the week, a new Coastal Route provides service on Highway 1 between Stinson Beach/Bolinas and Point Reyes Station. MCTD secured larger vehicles for the Stage through its new contractor and is preparing those vehicles. The Stage service will consist of a maximum of 11,225 annual hours of service and will receive partial funding from a Federal Transit Administration 5311 rural transit service grant in the amount of \$335,583 for FY 2007/2008. MCTD will also initiate a transit needs assessment for West Marin with extensive public outreach.

Sub Strategy 1.3 - *Maintain and Expand Transit Services and Programs for those with Special Needs*

Marin County Transit District contracts with Whistlestop Wheels to provide specialized transportation service for older adults and persons with disabilities who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Whistlestop provides over 85,000 trips for these clients each year and demand for this service is expected to grow significantly as the County's population ages. As identified in the SRTP, MCTD expanded the number of service hours by five percent in FY 2006/2007 and will do so again in FY 2007/2008. Services for seniors and persons with disabilities are planned with the support of the existing consumer-based Paratransit Coordinating Council, which advises the Transit District on the needs of these communities, and public input from all areas of the county. MCTD directly pays for all fuel costs associated with the provision of intra-county paratransit. In FY 2006/07, MCTD supported a successful small-scale program to provide taxi services for non-mandated paratransit clients within its contract with Whistlestop and is working with the agency to expand this program to ADA-mandated clients. The goal is to achieve better efficiencies in scheduling trips and improved customer service.

In addition to regular paratransit, MCTD contracts with Whistlestop to provide EZ Rider shuttle and demand-responsive services in Novato. Many senior and disabled Novato

residents live far from public transit services and do not qualify for ADA-mandated paratransit. EZ Rider provides an option to improve their mobility, including access to medical services. The special needs budget includes funds for programs to train seniors and developmentally disabled adults in how to use the regular local bus services – what the transit industry refers to as “travel training.” Funds are also included for a program to support a more extensive taxi service program for paratransit riders based on the recommendation of a taxi study now underway. The study is supported by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Sub Strategy 1.4 - *Invest in Bus Transit Facilities for a Clean and Efficient Transit System*

Innovative bus transit operation requires investment in vehicles and facilities. This includes clean-fueled vehicles, new bus transit facilities in Novato and Marin City for efficient and safe transfer between routes, and amenities at bus stops, including enhancements of bus stop accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists and improved information for transit riders. Other MCTD capital priorities include expansion the paratransit vehicle fleet and accessible taxi cabs.

MCTD’s contract with Golden Gate Transit calls for MCTD to provide matching funds for the purchase of buses dedicated to local service, and a proportional match for buses it shares with the regional system. MCTD is also responsible for contributing a share of capital funds for maintenance facilities and other system-wide transit capital needs in proportion to the amount it uses. The ability to go beyond these commitments is dependent on discretionary funds.

The capital needs of the Marin County transit system will rely heavily on Measure A and existing sources available to Golden Gate Transit and MCTD for funding. However, SAFETEA-LU, the newly authorized federal transit bill, provides new opportunities that are included in the funding plan. The SRTP does not assign a specific funding source to an individual project, but applies the full range of potential funding sources to a broad set of funding priorities to create a balanced plan. Each source has limitations, and as new information becomes available about discretionary sources, individual projects may be accelerated or pushed back in time. The capital plan requires MCTD to aggressively pursue new funds available through SAFETEA-LU and other funds to address the system’s capital needs. Measure A capital funding requests will be applied to appropriate projects as matching funds.

MCTD is obligated to provide Golden Gate Transit with \$431,732 as its contribution towards bus system capital costs. MCTD Board approved \$1.32 million in matching funds to replace a fleet of ten articulated buses with low-floor clean diesel articulated buses in June 2006. These buses will go into operation in July 2007. As the Board requested that any new MCTD vehicle carry three bicycles where feasible, MCTD has committed to provide an additional \$2,000 to add capacity for one more bike per rack for each bus.

MCTD has received approval to purchase three larger vehicles for the West Marin Stage service using Federal Transit Administration rural transit funds administered by Caltrans, and has applied for funds to purchase one additional vehicle. The first three vehicles will be delivered in Fall 2007. MCTD provides the local match for these vehicles. Based on purchase of vehicles available from the State Procurement List, the MCTD match is estimated at \$71,738. MCTD will also provide matching funds for a small project to rehabilitate the Marin City transfer hub. Other projects include accessible taxis, mobile data

terminals for paratransit communications, local matching funds to purchase up to 16 paratransit vehicles, and a State-funded environmental study and alternatives analysis for a Novato transfer hub.

Strategic Plan Update Programmed and Requested Amounts:

Strategy 1 – Local Bus Transit	Programmed Amount	Requested Amount
1.1 Maintain and Expand Local Bus Transit Service	\$6,463,516	\$6,463,516
1.2 Maintain & Expand Rural Bus Transit System	\$709,946	\$648,920
1.3 Maintain & Expand Transit Services for Those with Special Needs	\$1,639,595	\$1,639,595
1.4 Invest in Bus Transit Facilities for a Clean and Efficient Transit System	\$ 1,264,367	\$ 1,264,367
Total	\$10,077,424	\$10,016,398

Other Funds: MCTD will leverage Measure A funds with other funds, including:

- Transportation Development Act Funds (TDA)
- State Transit Assistance Funds (STA)
- Fares
- Property Taxes (used primarily for paratransit)
- Section 5311 Rural Transit Funds (used for West Marin Stagecoach Service)

Project Delivery Schedule: July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

Environmental Clearance: Not Applicable